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MORE ABOUT SHAKESPEARE "FORGERIES."

MORE ABOUT

SHAKESPEARE "FORGERIES"

A Reply to certain articles in "The Athenæum," signed "Audi alteram partem," controverting the arguments and conclusions set forth in "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries."

The poet wh mayd the plaies & Shaxberd:

BY

ERNEST LAW, B.A.,

BARRISTER AT LAW,

Author of "The History of Hampton Court";
"Shakespeare as a Groom of the Chamber," etc.

WITH FACSIMILES OF DOCUMENTS.

LONDON: G. BELL & SONS, LTD.
1913.

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PREFACE.

The first part of this little book is a reprint of five letters written to "The Athenæum," in answer to a series of three articles by an anonymous correspondent of that journal, criticizing and challenging the conclusions put forward in the writer's "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries."

The second part consists of his rejoinder to his critic's reply, which was embodied in a further series of four articles in the same columns. This part has not been printed before; but as the case for the authenticity of the so-called "Cunningham Forgeries" would have been incomplete without it, its publication now, together with his letters to "The Athenæum," in a complete form, appears to be advisable.

The importance of the documents discussed—apart from the question whether the name of a well-known literary man is unjustly to bear, for all time, the false

imputation of several base forgeries—fully warrants, if it does not indeed demand, this presentation of the whole case for the manuscripts impugned. This is the more so, in that "The Athenæum's" correspondent, in his later articles, proceeds to challenge the authenticity of two or three further documents, hitherto universally regarded as unquestionably genuine.

Of two of those originally impugned, it is to be borne in mind that, if genuine, as the present writer contends, they not only afford us irrefragible evidence of the exact dates of the production of "Measure for Measure," "Othello," "The Winter's Tale," and "The Tempest," but they also guide us to finding material of the very highest value for the reconstruction of the circumstances and conditions under which these four great plays were presented at Whitehall before King James and his Court. We are enabled, for instance, to identify in each case the chamber of the Palace where the play was acted; the dimensions and shape of it; its decoration and lighting; the position and size of the stage in it; the scenic effects, and so on. And, for those whose imagination is stimulated by such identifications, we can stand in the

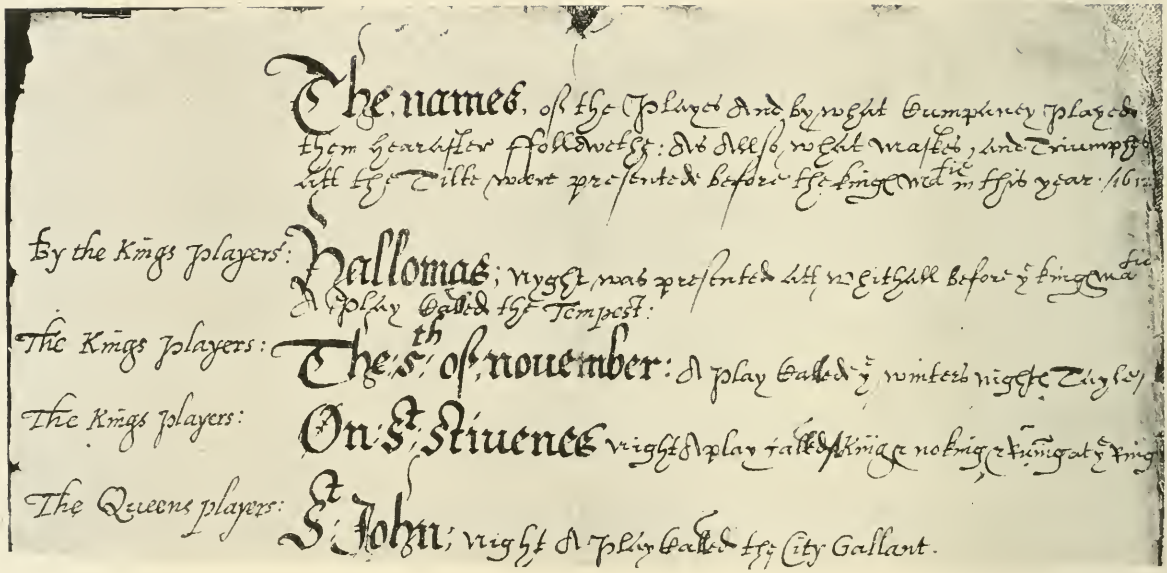
Whitehall of to-day, either within the walls of one of the rooms of the Board of Trade, or in the road-way of "Horse-Guards Avenue," and say: "Here, on this very spot, stood the stage on the night on which this play was first given at Court; here, exactly, within a few feet, sat King James and his Queen; and over here was the tyring-room, where Shakespeare himself would have stood watching the performance.

These facts will appear more fully in the writer's forthcoming work, "Shakespeare at Whitehall," the publication of which it has seemed proper to postpone, until all he had to say against the aspersions cast on these most interesting documents had been laid before the Shakespearean students.

One further remark only needs to be made here, and it is this: Professor Feuillerat, than whom no man living has a more exhaustive and intimate knowledge of the Revels' Accounts in the Record Office, has authorized the writer to say that he entirely agrees with the opinion that the disputed documents are absolutely genuine, and that Peter Cunningham is to be altogether exonerated from any attempt at tampering with them. It may be added

that Professor Feuillerat, in the preface to his great work on the Office of the Revels, had previously stated that he had found Cunningham a "most accurate" transcriber of the documents he published.

It is with no small satisfaction that the writer is able to add testimony in favour of his conclusions so valuable as this of the great French student of our national archives, to that of the many distinguished scholars and palæographers already mentioned in his earlier book.


The names, of the Plays And by wch Companies Plays
them heerafter followeth: Ao Dñi 1611, wch maskes, and Triumphs
wth the Title wch were presented before the kinge wch in this year 1611
By the Kings players: Hallomas; wch was presented wth wch hall before ye kinge ma
A play called the Tempest:
The Kings players: The 5th of november: A play called ye winters nights Tayle
The Kings players: On S. Stiuence wch play called the kinge no kinge & the kinge at ye
The Queens players: S. John; wch A play called the City Gallant.

Facsimile, reduced by about one-third of its original size, of a portion of the List of Plays prefixed to the Revels Account for 1611-12, containing entries of the first performances at Whitehall of "The Tempest" and "Ye Winter's Nightes Tayle," declared by "Audi alteram partem" to have been forged by Peter Cunningham.

(See *post*, p. 31, *et seq.*)

MORE ABOUT
SHAKESPEARE "FORGERIES."

(Reprinted from "The Athenæum.")

IN replying to the articles by your correspondent "Audi alteram partem," controverting my conclusions in favour of the authenticity of the lists of plays, now among the Revels' Accounts in the Record Office, and published by Peter Cunningham in 1842, I find myself at somewhat of a disadvantage. For, while disclaiming being himself anything of an "expert," he pays scarcely any regard to the pronouncements of those who admittedly are "experts" of the very first authority. He gives, that is to say, no weight whatever to the reasoned opinions of such well-known palæographers as Sir George Warner, head of the Manuscript Department in the British Museum, and Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte and other officials of the Public Record Office; none either to Dr. Wallace; none to

Prof. Dobbie, the chief Government analyst, who has made a technical and scientific examination of the writings in question.

Nevertheless, at the same time, he does not hesitate to make, on his own account, positive assertions about them, for which he offers no corroboration whatever, and which are entirely unsupported by fact or probability. Likewise he sets at naught Halliwell-Phillipps's whole argument, wherein he traced back to a period thirty years previous to Cunningham's publication the remarkable memorandum found by him in 1879 among Malone's papers in the Bodleian, giving the information supplied by the play-list of 1604-5. After this, needless to say that he gives no hearing whatever to the evidence set out by me, in "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries," in explanation of the probable, if not certain, origin and genuineness of the Bodleian memorandum. He suggests instead that

"on the publication of Cunningham's book in 1842, one of the Curators of the Bodleian took a note of these new points and went to search among Malone's papers to see if there was any allusion to them, and that not finding any.....he *might* have left his memorandum among the manuscripts, hoping to come back and search again."

For this strange surmise he offers, and, of course, could offer, not a particle of proof, or even probability.

He next goes on to say that "the information contained in the memorandum *might* have been derived" from the Lord Chamberlain's Warrant-Books from 1603 to 1628, which, though they have been missing from time

immemorial, "*might* not then have been lost,* and *might* have told all that was in Malone's scrap." For these further surmises, likewise, he can, of course, offer neither proof nor probability. Indeed, the Lord Chamberlain's books of 1628 to 1640, which are extant, show that it is highly improbable that the lost earlier ones would have contained any such particulars as he suggests.

Further, he seeks to discredit Malone's possession of the Bodleian memorandum by asking, "Is it likely he would not have spoken of it?—but he told no one." How can your correspondent know, at this time of day, a hundred years after, that Malone "told no one"? That he had in his possession some new evidence as to the dates of "Othello" and "Measure for Measure" is certain; for he definitely stated so in his public writings, though he did not reveal in them what it was. That he died before he could bring out the intended new edition of his Shakespearean commentary, with all his new material incorporated and attested, is surely an adequate explanation of the circumstances.

Passing from this part of the case, your correspondent proceeds—after disparaging the value of the chemical and microscopical testings of the ink and paper—to propound theories about old writings and old inks which appear to me to be as strange as they are new, and which will

* That they were missing so long ago as 1797 we know from Chalmers' "Apology," published in that year, in which, while giving copious extracts from the books still extant, he notes that the earlier ones were lost.

scarcely, I imagine, commend themselves to scientific palæographers.

It was the supposed modern character of the ink that was the chief ground on which the play-list of 1604-5 was condemned in 1868; and now that it has been demonstrated, by scientific analysis, that the ink is not modern at all—neither in appearance, nor in mechanical effect, nor in chemical constitution—your correspondent, being desirous of still supporting the condemnation of the list, shifts the ground, and, admitting that "the ink was proved to be the same in the Shakespearean list as in the rest of the document," exclaims triumphantly, "Of course it was!" Why "of course?" "Because," says he, "the constituents of the *ink used in the Record Office* were the same from before the seventeenth century down to the date at which he (Cunningham) used it." Permanent constituents apparently, always and everywhere the same for 250 years down to 1842, in hundreds of thousands of documents, written with thousands of pens all over the country—all from the same brew, if not from the same pot! It is, in truth, impossible to treat an argument of this sort seriously. It would be more in accordance with fact to say that the old inks were vastly less uniform in their composition than our modern ones—as they certainly vary much more in their present appearance.

If, to evade the natural interpretation of his words. he were to contend that by his curious expression "the

ink used in the Record Office," he meant only the ink of the documents relating to the Revels, it would not help him much. For the diversity of substance and appearance—under the naked eye, as well as under the microscope—of the ink found in these records is remarkable and palpable—especially in the case of the signatures, admittedly genuine, of the three or four attesting officers appended to the very accounts under discussion.

Finally, on this point it can scarcely be necessary to remark that a pigment concocted in modern times to imitate the faded look of an old ink would, of course, with the lapse of years, itself fade to a very different tint.

As to the other points of your correspondent's case, founded on the physical appearance of the document, I will not weary your readers with discussing them, for they mostly carry their own refutation to anyone who, with an unbiased mind, will examine the originals, or at least the facsimiles, for himself.

But it is by moral rather than physical considerations, by literary rather than scientific criticism, that your correspondent seeks to establish his contention that these play-lists were forged by Peter Cunningham.

In support of it he invokes an imaginary "artist," who is made to pronounce the document to be a forgery by mere "intuition," asserting, on no better authority, that the writer of the play-lists was nothing but a poor "copyist," "whose eye knew the forms of the letters of

the times, but the muscles of his hand had not been trained to obey the dictates of his eye," whose "tremulous pen occasionally slips," and who, "to hide it, trims his letters at abnormal points." He also invokes an imaginary "writing-master," who would, he supposes, declare that the copyist "did not know how to cut his pens, or hold his hand for that style of writing"—that

"he had often to stop and *paint* his letters; that is to say, to pass his pen up and down them in places. In some parts of the list it is evident that the fresh ink was written on the top of more faded writing. You can still see the margins of the old in a few places."

All this sounds very curious and suspicious, yet for no single word of these imaginary criticisms of his hypothetical "artist" and "writing-master" is there the slightest foundation in the document itself, as may be seen by any one who should scrutinize it with the naked eye, and still more so through a magnifying glass.

He next calls in the aid of a "man of letters," through whose imaginary mouth he declares: "The punctuation is unusual, and the spelling more so." When I have dealt with this branch of his argument, I feel pretty sure that there are few readers of "The Athenæum" who will not agree with me in thinking that there is no "man of letters," except your correspondent, who would make himself responsible for such a remarkable assertion.

His point about the punctuation is easily disposed of, for at best it is of a very negative kind, seeing that there is not a comma nor a semicolon in the whole two pages—

as indeed there was no need to be in a mere tabular list like this—while the use of the colon is quite in accord with what is customary in other portions of the records of the Revels.

But the principal objection of "Audi alteram partem" to the play-list of 1604-5 lies in its spelling. "It was unusual," declares he, "to spell 'poets' and 'plays' without an *e;* it is more so to put 'Octobar' and 'Novembar' instead of 'October' or 'Octobre.'" First, as to the spelling "poets," instead of "poetes": this was by no means so rare in those times as he supposes, though the word in the plural form does not occur very often either in official documents or in literature. In the whole of Shakespeare's plays, for instance, it occurs only four times; but in each case in the First Folio it is spelt "poets." As to the plural "plays," it is not to be found at all, strange to say, anywhere in Shakespeare. But the spelling without the *e* is far from being unusual; and I could readily furnish many examples of it in various warrants and other official documents of the period. One only need I refer to—the note in the margin of the Revels Account for 1587: "The names of the *plays* shold be expressed." This is inexcusable in your correspondent to have ignored, for I had mentioned it in my little book (p. 37), and he himself cites it as not given by Cunningham. It is printed, however, by M. Feuillerat, who points out that it

is a note by the auditor, desirous of fuller information; and as such it is a corroboration of the genuineness of the play-list in issue.

To give even this instance, however, is superfluous; for here again your correspondent's argument is laid on a false foundation. He has, in fact, read the writings he impugns so carelessly as not to have noticed that all the time he is objecting to the play-list of 1604-5 on account of this supposed modern spelling, the word is, as a fact, in each case where it occurs in this list, spelt "plaies," and not "plays."

As to the spelling "Octobar," we have to search no further than the Revels Account of 1611-12—unchallenged even by your correspondent, cited, in fact, by him as unquestionably authentic—for three instances of this supposed tell-tale mock-antique spelling. They occur on pp. 1 and 2 of the account, and also at the end of it, just over the signature of Sir George Buc, the then Master of the Revels. As to the spelling "Novembar," there are two instances of it in this same unchallenged account. Evidently your correspondent not only cannot have read the original account with any reasonable intelligence or care—if at all; he cannot even have read Cunningham's print of it, where this spelling, correctly reproduced, strikes the eye at once.

Naturally enough, your correspondent falls foul of the spelling "Shaxberd," ignoring altogether the evidence

set out in my little book in support of its authenticity; ignoring its occurrence in the scrap among Malone's papers in the Bodleian; and ignoring also the almost identical spelling of the immortal name in the Stratford records.

But it is the spelling of the contraction "Ma^{tis}" for "Majesty's" which seems to have most disturbed him. "It can safely be asserted," says he, "that in no other place in the Record Office is 'Majesty' spelt as 'Majesti.'" This, far from being a safe assertion, would, in any case, be a very rash one; for anybody having but the slightest acquaintance with early seventeenth-century writing would be loath to exclude any possible eccentricity in spelling among the hundreds of thousands of documents of that time still unsearched in the Record Office. Apart from that repository, however, this very spelling "Ma^{ti}" occurs several times in the contemporary letters of a person of no less learning and authority than Sir Philip Sidney. Here are a few references out of many: "a poor encrease to her Ma^{ti}" (Harl. MSS. 285, ff. 164-5); "wch is not absolut as her Ma^{ti} took it," &c. (do. f. 293); "if her Ma^{ti} wear the fountaine," &c. (do. 287, f. 1).

But even if he could have proved it otherwise, his argument would have broken down. For it is noticeable at the outset that neither the word "Majesti" in its full form, nor its contracted form "Ma^{ti}," occurs in this impugned play-list at all! It is only the possessive case,

"Ma^{tis}"—which is a very different thing. Even, too, as to this, considering the ingenious vagaries of spelling and contraction indulged in by the penmen of the period, the most sceptical of critics need scarcely have had his suspicions aroused by this particular one. For in turning over a few leaves of the Revels Accounts, we quickly come across such varieties as "Ma^{te}," "Ma^{ts}," "Ma^{tes}," "Ma^{ties}," "Ma^{tyes}," "Mat^{tys}"—even by the same scribe and often on the same page.

At any rate, before making the positive assertion he does in the pages of "The Athenæum," and building on it one of his main arguments, he might at least have tested it by having a look at Prof. Feuillerat's great work on the "Office of the Revels." On p. 408 he would have found "A Petition of William Bowll" (printed from the State Papers in the Record Office, Dom. Eliz. Addenda xx. No. 101, December, 1571) "to the right honorable and my singular good Lorde, the Lorde of Burley," craving the office formerly held by "John Holte, late Yoman of the Queens Ma^{tis} Revells."

This instance alone would have disposed of this branch of his argument. But this is not all. When he was making his "safe assertion," all the while, in the body of the original manuscript account of 1611-12—accepted by him, as I have said, as entirely genuine, and even cited by him in his endeavour to discredit the play-list prefixed to it—staring him in the face in the body of this very

account, occurs, no less than *nine times* over, in a a few pages, this identical spelling and contraction "Ma^{tis}"; while even in the account of 1604-5 it is to be found twice.

Not only can your correspondent not have read through the documents discussed in his articles; he can scarcely have even glanced at Cunningham's book—the book of the man whose memory he is trying again to besmirch with the stigma of forgery—in which this spelling, correctly transcribed, occurs six times at least!

Yet he has found fault with me because—according to him—I have "not worked at the papers either long enough or carefully enough"; and because my "methods of research will not satisfy cautious inquirers."

May I suggest to him that length of work does not necessarily ensure accuracy of research, while assuring him, and those of your readers who are interested in the question, that every single point that might weigh in favour of the theory of the forgery of the documents was considered and tested by me, before I ventured to lay the case for their genuineness before Shakespearean scholars? Some of these points seemed worthy of being specifically dealt with, but I must own that it could never have entered my head to anticipate most of those put up by your correspondent.

Passing from your correspondent's strictures on the spelling, the next "most important line of investigation," according to him, "lies in the words and what they

express." "Throughout the whole list," says he, "the plays are stated to be on 'St. Jons* night,' 'Inosents night,' &c., *as in no other case in the history of plays is it recorded.* It is *always rendered* 'St. Johns day at night,' 'Innocents day at night,'" &c.

Though it is certainly a fact that the latter are the expressions most generally used, yet he is here again—small as is the point—utterly, even perversely, wrong. I cannot cite against him the case of the play-list of 1611-12, as the authenticity of that list is likewise still contested by him. Nevertheless, the fact that in it we have precisely the same forms of expression — "Hallomas Night," "St. Stivenes Night," "St. John's Night," "Neweres Night," "Candlemas Night"—instead of the more usual, less-contracted expressions, may be noted here.

But I can cite other and quite conclusive instances

* Misread by your correspondent. It should be "Jhons," which is a common inversion of the spelling. See the "Petition of Creditors and Servitors of the Revels," Nov. to Jan., 1597/8, among whom was "*Jhon* Griffith, Porter of St. *Jhons* Gate" (Feuillerat, p. 417).

[Replying to this note of mine, my critic, in one of his subsequent articles, explains that he was "generalizing, not quoting." "I *did* notice" says he, "the peculiar way the *h* was squeezed into "St. Jhon's night." This can hardly be as he says. For had he been "generalizing," and not quoting, he would, of course, in his original article, have written the word "John's," which he did not; though from his reply anyone would suppose that he had; whereas he really wrote "Jons." Also, had he been generalizing, and not quoting, he would not have written "Inosents night." Yet, in a still later article, ignoring both his former views, he adopts a third—that the supposed "*h*" is only a "clumsy ornamental line, which could not, under any circumstances, be taken for an '*h*.'" I don't agree with him, but my readers can judge for themselves by examining the facsimile prefixed to "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries."]

in the records of play-actings at Court. Just noting "Candlemas Nighte" in the Revels' Account for 1574-5 (Feuillerat, p. 224), and the analogous "Twelf night" and "Shrove Sondaie night" in that of 1580 (*ibid.*, p. 336), I find expressions almost identical with those he impugns in the body of the account for 1604-5, as well as in that for 1611-12. In each case they are items of charge by "Wierdrawers," for mending and getting ready the candle-branches in the daytime preparatory for the performances, and attending them also at night. In 1604: "To VI men on St. John's day and ye night . . . . To IIII men on Childermas day and night"; and in 1611: "Item VI men on St. Stiuens day and night . . . ."

Stronger still is an item in the accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber among the Audit Office archives in the Record Office. It records a payment to "John Hemynges, one of his Ma^ties^ players . . . for XIII plaies presented by them before his Ma^tie^ at the Court at Whitehall viz. on St. Stephen's Night, St. John's Night, Childermas Night," &c. (Pipe Office Declared Accounts, Bundle 543, folio 196).

This item is printed by Peter Cunningham in the Introduction to his "Extracts"; and it is incomprehensible to me how your correspondent came to ignore it. The least he should have done was carefully to have read, and made himself thoroughly familiar with, the valuable work of the man he charges with forgery, before putting forth

in support of his charge an argument so fallacious as the one now confuted.

Equally to the point—if any further confutation of your correspondent's argument be needed—is the case of Sir Henry Herbert's famous "Office Book," kept by him when Master of the Revels, which, though now lost, we have ample extracts from, made by Malone and Chalmers. In a "Note of such playes as were acted at Court in 1623 and 1624" we find Herbert making use, twice over, of precisely the very expressions "upon St. John's Night" and "upon Innocents' Night," which afford, in the view of your correspondent, "ample reason for the strongest suspicion of forgery in the account of 1604-5."

He next proceeds to discuss the entry, "Betwin Newers Day and Twelfe day a play of Loues* Labours Lost," arguing from its indefiniteness, and from the fact that there is no mention in the body of the account of the workmen preparing for a performance at Court between those dates, that the whole document must be a forgery.

Why I take exactly the opposite view, and maintain, on the contrary—fortified by the opinion of Halliwell-Phillipps—that this entry is the very strongest possible corroboration of the authenticity of the substance, at any rate, of the information afforded by the play-list, has been fully set out in my little book, so that I can scarcely be

* I noted in my original letter that my critic had spelt this word wrongly, "Lowes," as an example of his carelessness in transcription. In his reply, however, he explains that this was a printer's error.

expected to recapitulate it all here. Until 1872, when there was discovered at Hatfield a letter of Sir Walter Cope's to Cecil about Burbage's proposed performance in January, 1605, at Southampton House, of the recently revived "Loues Labour's Lost"* for the amusement of the Queen, no one—Cunningham no more than any one else—could have had the slightest idea that so old a play still held the stage in the early years of the reign of James I. Halliwell-Phillipps, it is true, assumed that there were two performances of it, close to each other, one at Court and the other at Southampton House. To my mind, it seems unlikely that there was any performance of the comedy at Court at all—which would account, if not for the indefiniteness of the entry, at least for the absence of any record of payment to the actors, or of any reference to the usual preparations for a performance at Whitehall Palace between New Year's Day and Twelfth Day, in the accounts either of the Master of the Revels or of the Treasurer of the Chamber. All the expenses, including fees to the actors, and the payments to the Revels' men, would have been met by Lord Southampton—and not out of the Privy Purse; and the note in the play-list of the performance attended by the Revels' men at his house would have been made by a clerk, who, not having been present himself, might, not unnaturally, be uncertain of its

* Halliwell-Phillipps' "Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare," 6th edition, vol. ii, p. 83.

date, when probably, nearly a year after the event, he came to compile the list. Mistakes as to dates of performances, in truth, abound in the old Revels' accounts, as a study of M. Feuillerat's valuable notes to his book will at once convince anybody.

Your correspondent, having assumed that if there was a performance of "Love's Labour's Lost" "betwin Newers Day and Twelfe day" it must have been before the King at Court, goes on to argue against any such performance on the ground that His Majesty's Players "were not likely to play it again at Southampton House on the 12th of January, as the State Papers say, before the Queen and her brother." But, unfortunately for this argument, "the State Papers" —whereby he can only mean the letter of Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, dated January 15th, 1604/5 (State Papers, Domestic, James I)—do not mention the 12th as the date of Southampton's entertainment to the Queen; nor is there mention of the name of any play; while a careful reading of the exact words of Carleton's original letter in the Record Office, instead of the bare abstract of it in the Calendar, suggests that the festivities referred to probably took place on an earlier day in the year—presumably "betwin Newers Day and Twelfe day." I had, of course, convinced myself of this explanation of the supposed discrepancy before I hazarded what I say about it on p. 53 of my book.

The most plausible point, it seems to me, that "Audi alteram partem" has succeeded in making against the play-list of 1604-5 is that it is not complete. "There were many more performances," says he, "than are here reckoned, as may be seen from the Declared Accounts" —meaning, presumably, those of the Treasurer of the Chamber. I do not, however, agree with his words "many more," nor with his deduction. It is true that there seems to be a discrepancy about one of the performances before the King (no others were, as a rule, attended by the Revels' men)—but one only—of which we cannot exactly see the explanation now, for we know so little about the facts. Did we know more, the solution would probably turn out to be simple enough. Here again, too, the apparent discrepancy—apart from any possible clerical error—is equally in favour of the genuineness of the record. The forger—if there had been one—would have had at his disposal for the concoction of his fraud no more, and probably less, than we have for the detection of it. His only source could have been the accounts of the Treasurer of the Chamber and of the Master of the Revels, and in fabricating his document he would scarcely have made it palpably inconsistent with his material. This is, of course, irrespective altogether of my contention that out of material so insufficient no one would have been likely to venture on a forgery of such a list as this at all. Moreover, there is the fact that nothing

that has since been discovered in any way conflicts with the information it supplies.

When your correspondent rashly proceeds to specify and particularize, his over-confidence at once betrays him. "There was," says he,

"at least one other title. In the Stationers' Registers there is entered on February 8th, 1604/5, 'A Commedy called "The Fayre Mayd of Bristoe" [not Bristoll, as your correspondent gives it], played at Hampton Court by his Majest^ies Players,'"

inferring that the comedy was played at Court within the period covered by the play-list—that is, October 31st, 1604, to October 31st, 1605.

But no inference could be more unwarranted or more unfortunate; for there were no plays at all given by the King's Players, or any other company, at Hampton Court within the year in question. The truth is the entry refers, and can only refer, to one of the plays acted at Hampton Court during the Christmastide 1603/4, when the Court was staying there on account of the prevalence of the plague in London—as I have proved elsewhere from various unpublished documents in the Record Office.* These facts your correspondent evidently knows nothing about, as they are not stated in any of the ordinary dramatic annals, or lives of Shakespeare—though they appear in the later editions of Halliwell-Phillipps's "Outlines," published after he had been furnished by me privately with this little bit of information. That "The

* "History of Hampton Court," vol. ii, p. 12; and "A Royal Masque at Hampton Court."

Fayre Mayd of Bristoe" was not published until rather more than a year after being acted at Court, was only in accordance with custom—the immediate publication of a play being of the rarest occurrence, for the very good reason that it was highly injurious to the interests of the players.

Your correspondent's next argument against the play-list is, if possible, even more groundless still. He turns to the accounts proper, and discovers what he avers to be

"the strange fact that the account of Tilney, Master of the Revels, *begins* at the foot of p. 2, though the Master's account generally follows that of the workmen. It begins, there are two paragraphs of it, and then abruptly there follows an interpolation of the play-list, without connexion or explanation. Immediately after these, the workmen's expenses begin on p. 5, and it is not until p. 7 [Cunningham, 'Revels,' p. 207] that Tilney's account begins again."

To all this the answer is very simple. Tylney's account—that is, his personal account, for in one sense the whole book is his account—does *not* begin on p. 2; and there are *not* two paragraphs of it there. It duly follows that of the workmen, and there is nothing whatever unusual in its position or anything else about it. What your correspondent takes for the beginning of Tylney's account is two notes (neither of them printed by Cunningham), one in Latin, for the auditor, stating how much had been paid on account, and how much was still due to the Master.

As to the arrangement of this account, compared with that of others, scarcely two of them agree exactly in form; yet in few of the cases—and there are many—in which

there is a list of plays, does its position vary from that of the disputed one. There is, in fact, to any one who is familiar with these accounts, nothing whatever abnormal in that of 1604-5 ; and it would have certainly passed unnoticed and unchallenged had it not contained entries relating to Shakespeare.

How anyone investigating these documents, in order to test their authenticity, can have fallen into such extraordinary blunders as those just exposed, is really nothing less than amazing. Only more amazing is your correspondent's contention that the preliminary writing on page 2 (Cunningham's "Revels," p. 203), which is "common form"—common to almost every one of the accounts preserved to us, and of which the genuineness has never before been questioned by anybody—is also forged. This theory seems to have been resorted to by him to get over the difficulty that, as he says himself, "it is certain that the same hand wrote it as wrote" the impugned play-list. Having gone so far, he might as well have declared the whole account to be forged, and thus have got over, at a stroke, all difficulties of ink-tests and everything else. As to the argument whereby he seeks to bolster up his contention, it seems to me to be a mere trifling with your readers. It is that the supposed forger of the play-list

"*might* see, after it was done, that he should have put the usual description in the blank space which had been left for it, and, in order to avoid suspicion, he *might* write on p. 2 what in all other cases has been written on p. 3."

Such a wonderful forger as your correspondent imagines *might*, indeed, have done almost anything; but I doubt whether even such a forger could have combined the extraordinary stupidity of proceeding in the way he supposes, with the extraordinary cleverness of being able to forge the preliminary matter as it appears on p. 2, as well as the play-list on pp. 3 and 4. (My opponent, referring subsequently to this point, entirely ignores my objections to his contention; though he proceeds quietly to abandon it, and writes as though he had only objected "to a *passage at the foot* of p. 2." His original argument, however, was directed as clearly as possible against the *whole* of the writings on that page; and this shifting and pretence scarcely helps him much. The passage he still considers forged consists of the two notes referred to above as not printed by Cunningham—doubtless because one was in Latin and neither of any general interest.)

All your correspondent's subordinate arguments are of a similar order, but I do not think I need trouble your readers with refuting, at length, every word he says.

I will now deal with the arguments put forward by him against the authenticity of the play-list of 1611-12,* although it is obviously by the same hand as the rest of the account, on the back of the beginning of which it is written, its lettering being precisely the same in style;

* See facsimile at page 11.

the ink the same in effect, look, and colour, and, examined with a magnifying-glass, revealing nothing whatever different from that of the rest of the writing. If genuine—as I maintain I have proved it to be—it is exceedingly interesting as fixing for us the much-disputed date of the composition of "The Tempest."

Your correspondent, however, has no hesitation in questioning it, and he indicates several circumstances about it which to him appear to be highly suspicious. His first point is that

"while the names of plays begin with 1st November, at the end we find 'a noate of the Stufe, workmanship and service for the King, *beginning 5th November*, 1611.' That [says he] would imply there was no service in preparation for a play on the first; the date of the contested play, 'The Tempest.'"

In answer to this I can show that it "would imply" nothing of the sort. To begin with: his quotation of the extract is incorrect. In the original it is written thus:—

"A noat of what Stufe wth workmanshipe hath bine bestowed one the branches for the Kinges Ma^{tis} [note the spelling] Servis this yeare beginning the Vth of Novembar, 1611."

Your correspondent says of this "noat" that we find it "at the end." If we give these words their obvious meaning—that is, at the end of the account—he is incorrect again; for it comes at the beginning of p. 4—the one following, and back to back with, that on which the play-list is written.

Next, he does not seem to have noticed that this bill, with all its items, relates not to the Revels men in general, but to the "wierdrawers" in particular—only.

Now the "wierdrawers" were those who mended, prepared, and "garnished" the wires and rods from which hung the branch candlesticks and other lights in the auditorium and on the stage, as well as the lights themselves; and although the "wierdrawers" seem usually to have attended the Court performances at night, sometimes they did not do so. Their work, indeed, was quite as much, if not more, preparing for the plays in the daytime before—often several days before—the performances; and on the days between them.

Moreover, the dates, on which the accounts of the various officers of the Revels began, differ often by a day or two. Thus in the year under discussion (1611-12) that of the Master begins on "Allhollen Eve," while those of "the Clark Comptroler" and the "Clark of his Ma^tie^ [note the spelling] Revelles" begin on Hallowmas Day.

The explanation, then, of the supposed discrepancy about the "wierdrawers'" attendance, which so perturbs your correspondent, is simple and obvious enough. It is that their work on Hallowmas Eve, preparatory for the production of the play on Hallowmas Day, falling within the month of October, would have been charged for in their account for the previous "Revels Year"—November 1st, 1610, to October 31st, 1611—an account which, unfortunately missing, may perhaps have included also the charge for their attendance on the night of the performance.

That there was a performance at Court of some play, at any rate, "upon the 1st of November" is certain; and that it was one of those in the repertoire of Shakespeare's company is likewise certain; for the payment to Hemynges for its presentation before the King is recorded by the Treasurer of the Chamber.

Your correspondent, indeed, is constrained to admit as much—though he fails to appreciate the significance of the fact; and adds—to get over the difficulty he himself has gratuitously raised—"but not in relation to this bill."

Whatever he may mean exactly by that, there can be no question that Sir George Buc and his men were, according to custom, in attendance at Whitehall Palace that night, superintending the performance, whatever may have been the play presented.

Your correspondent's only other point against this play-list is that it is incomplete. "Thirteen plays," he says, "are here entered by name; but in the accounts [he can only mean those of the Treasurer of the Chamber] there were thirty paid for by item, and dated." This is so, but of these thirty many were plays not given before the King and the Court, but privately, in some smaller apartment for the amusement of the Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, and the Princess Elizabeth; while it was only plays acted before the King, including, perhaps, sometimes those acted before the Queen, as I have already pointed out, which were attended and "mounted" by his

Majesty's Officers of the Revels. The Queen, it will be remembered, had her own "Master of the Revels," and Prince Henry, as well as her Majesty, his own Company of Players.

In fact, the records, if carefully analyzed, are found to tally exactly with the list of plays in question and their dates, as inscribed at the beginning of the Revels' account for this year. There are few, if any, discrepancies to be accounted for; and the authenticity of the play-list is not only supported, but even confirmed, by apparent ones, which, when solved, demonstrate—apart from the physical proof—that no modern hand, least of all one in 1842, could possibly have concocted this document.

However, your correspondent does "not dwell on this record, because," he says,

> "I have so much to say concerning what has been called the 'Revels' Account of 1636.' Mr. Law says expressly that no one has ever doubted it. I have always doubted it, and now, by careful research, I am able *to prove that this list is a forgery*" [his own italics].

He begins his argument by reproving me for calling it "one of the Revels' accounts."* "It is not," says he, "a Revels' Account at all." Nevertheless, I still maintain that this, though a general, is altogether an accurate, phrase to apply to a packet of three documents, which relate to payments for plays acted at Court under the superintendence of the Revels' Officers, and which are enclosed in a sheet bearing an official note that they relate

* For a facsimile of the document, see *post*, p. 39.

to "Plays and Revels." The authenticity of no single one of the three had ever been questioned by anyone when I wrote; and I only referred to the packet incidentally as one of the records abstracted by Cunningham from the Audit Office.

Your correspondent, however, proceeds to assert of this record that "no part of it ever belonged to the Audit Office." To this I unhesitatingly and emphatically answer, that *every* part of it—including the play-list (assuming it, of course, to be genuine)—belonged to that office. The list, having been made out probably by one of the players (it seems to be in the handwriting of Eillærdt Swanston), and handed by him to the Lord Chamberlain, would, according to custom, have been forwarded by his Lordship, with his warrant, to the Treasurer of the Chamber as his voucher for the payment of the money due to the players for the performances therein recorded. Passed on by the Treasurer to his "very loueing friends the Auditors of his Ma^ts^ Imprest," they must have remained in the Audit Office for upwards of two centuries at least—until 1842, when Cunningham printed the list, with the two other documents, in the Introduction to his "Extracts," p. xxv.* Some time between 1842 and 1859—the year when he retired from the Audit Office and its archives were removed to the Record Office—he took possession of the record, and soon after sold it to a Fleet

* See Appendix, *post*, p. 71.

Street bookseller, named Waller, who gave it up in 1868 to the Record Office, where it has remained ever since, classed among "Audit Office Papers—Various—Revels."

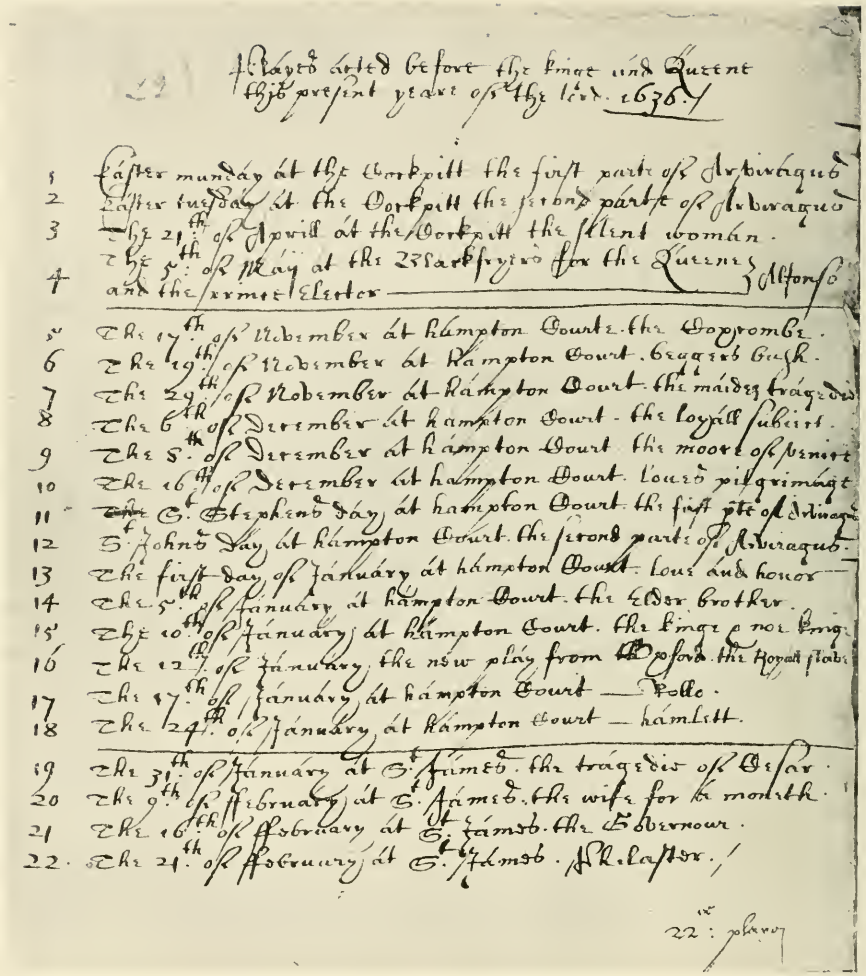
Such is the history of two, at any rate, of the documents composing this record, and likewise, if it is genuine, of the play-list; which, if not so valuable as the earlier lists, because not contemporary with Shakespeare, is yet interesting enough as showing how long his plays held the stage at Court, and how greatly they were always appreciated by Charles I.

Now let me examine in detail the ground on which your correspondent so confidently pronounces it to be "false" and "forged." Let me first take note of the way by which he reaches this conclusion. Not at all owing to any appearance of falsification in the document itself; not to any modern look about it; nor to anything whatever suspicious about the ink, lettering, paper, or anything else. No! He reaches this conclusion and invites Shakespearean scholars throughout the world to adopt it, on the *sole* ground—which I shall show to be absolutely fallacious—that he considers the place where, according to the list, certain performances were given, to be one where, according to him, they cannot possibly have been given—for a reason, that is to say, based, not on evidence, but on a mere inference of his own.

"There is no certainty [says he] that the names of the plays (beyond the one named [*i.e.*, 'The Royal Slave']) or the dates are true. And I can prove that the places where the performances are said to have taken place *are false*."

First, as to the names and dates. To test them there happens to be the very best authority possible—the Office-Book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels at the time. From this book, though now missing, excerpts were made by Malone 120 years ago, and were published by him in his "Historical Account of the English Stage," prefixed to vol i., pt. ii., of his 1790 edition, and reprinted after his death in the "third Variorum"—Boswell's "Malone"—in 1821. It is true that Herbert's list—at any rate, as transcribed by Malone—contains only thirteen entries—that is, of plays acted at Court from St. Stephen's Day, 1636, to Shrove Tuesday, 1637; whereas the Audit Office list gives the names and dates of twenty-two plays in all, presented within the whole theatrical year from Easter Monday, 1636, to Shrove Tuesday, 1637. But the last dozen or so entries of this impugned list tally almost exactly with Herbert's for the same period.* There is, therefore, the very best reason for holding, contrary to the view of your correspondent, that at least the names and dates of these plays, as given in the Audit Office list, are certainly "true"; and a strong presumption that the names and dates of the others are equally to be relied on.

*Herbert's list includes two plays by Beeston's Company, which would have no place in the Audit Office list, as that relates only to those given by the King's Company. Also, it gives no play for the 17th of January, assigning "Rollo," acted, according to the Record Office list, on that day, to the 24th, instead of "Hamlet," which it omits altogether. The probable explanation of the discrepancy is suggested, *post*, p. 63, *note*.



Plays acted before the King and Queene
this present yeare of the Lord. 1636.

1 Easter munday at the Cockpitt the first parte of Arbiraque
2 Easter tuesday at the Cockpitt the second parte of Arbiraque
3 the 21th of April at the Cockpitt the silent woman.
4 the 5th of May at the Clarkenwell for the Queenes Alfonso and the Germet Elector
5 The 17th of Nouember at Hampton Court the Coppromb.
6 The 19th of Nouember at Hampton Court. Beggars Bush.
7 The 24th of Nouember at Hampton Court the maides tragedie
8 The 6th of December at hampton Court. the loyall subiect.
9 The 8th of December at hampton Court the moore of Venice
10 The 16th of December at hampton Court. Lovrs pilgrimage
11 The S. Stephens day at hampton Court the first parte of Arbiraque
12 S. Johns Day at Hampton Court the second parte of Arbiraque
13 The first day of January at Hampton Court. Love and honor
14 The 5th of January at Hampton Court. the Elder brother.
15 The 10th of January at Hampton Court. the King & no King
16 The 12th of January the new play from the Cockpit the Royall slave
17 The 17th of January at Hampton Court — Polle.
18 The 24th of January at Hampton Court — hamlett.
19 The 31th of January at S. James. the tragedie of Cesar.
20 The 9th of February at S. James. the wife for a monith.
21 The 16th of February at S. James. the Lovrs vow.
22 The 24th of February at S. James. the Chaplen.

22 playes

Facsimile, reduced by about one-third of its original size, of the List of Plays acted at Hampton Court and elsewhere, before King Charles and his Queen in 1636-7: declared by "Audi alteram partem" to have been forged by Peter Cunningham.

I pass now to the question of their places of performance, which my critic declares he can *prove* to be *false*. Now, in Herbert's list, as given by Malone, although each several play has not its place of performance assigned to it *seriatim*, the list of those acted on the several dates between December 26th and January 24th is headed by the general title, "At Hampton Court," which surely ought to be considered precise enough, especially as the subsequent ones are stated, play by play, to have been acted at St. James's.

In the impugned Audit Office list—as the reader may see from the facsimile—all the plays entered as acted before the King and Queen on various dates from November 17th, 1636, to January 24th following—fourteen in all—are, each of them, play after play, specifically stated to have been acted at Hampton Court. Indeed, a small space is left, and a line drawn above the first of these entries and beneath the last, to distinguish them from the rest, which are stated to have been acted at the Cockpitt (Whitehall), Blackfriars, and St. James's.

Would a forger, we may ask incidentally, have gratuitously inserted such particulars of place, so liable to be erroneous, if made up 200 years after the event—so likely to be detected, as fresh sources of history are revealed?

We may think, however, what we choose about this; your correspondent is quite certain that the information, as regards thirteen out of the fourteen plays, is false, and

that the list is consequently a forgery. The plays, he says, *cannot* have been acted at Hampton Court. Why? Because, says he, the Lord Chamberlain's warrant* of March 12th, 1636/7—a document which, he informs us, in a magisterial sort of way, we may take it from him is genuine—shows that the payment of these performances was at the rate of £10 each, whereas, according to him, "ever after March 17th, 1630/31, at least, every performance at Hampton Court earned £20; and *the man who made the list did not know that!*" (His own italics.) Indeed, the man did *not* know that, for he knew a good deal more about it than your correspondent.

He knew, for example—as we ourselves may also know from the old accounts—that the fee for plays at Hampton Court in the time of King James had always been "twentie nobles a peece"—£6 13s. 4d.—to which was usually added "by way of his Ma^ties^ rewards fyve marks"—£3 6s. 8d.—making in all for each play £10. To give instances: he probably knew that such were the fees received by Hemynges on behalf of Shakespeare and other members of the King's Company, when they gave six performances in that palace, including "A Midsummer Night's Dream," during the Christmas holiday 1603-4;† and he probably knew also—as we may know even from

*Printed by Cunningham in his "Revels at Court," p. xxiv, and reprinted somewhat more fully and accurately in an Appendix, *post*, page 71.

†See the writer's "History of Hampton Court," where this information was first published.

Cunningham's book—that such were the fees paid for presenting "three playes before his Ma^tie^ and the King of Denmarke, twoe of them at Greenwich and one at Hampton Court," in the summer of 1606—together £30.

"The man who made the list" would, moreover, have known—as we also may know "by careful research"—that like fees were paid for plays at Hampton Court throughout the reign of King Charles. He would have known, for instance, that although the King's players received by warrant of the Lord Chamberlain ("Papers," class v., vol. xciii, p. 235), on March 18th, 1630-31, "Twenty pounds a piece for foure playes Acted at Hampton Court," the extra ten pounds a piece was "in respect and consideration of the travaile and expenses of the whole company in dyet and lodging during the time of their attendance there"—as, by the way, was again the case in March, 1632 (*Ibid.*, p. 325).

Likewise he would have known that when later in the year 1631 £170 was paid to the Queen's Players "for sixteen playes by them acted," there was a memorandum subjoined to the warrant (*ibid.*, p. 253) stating that "His L's'p. added (above the ordinary allowance of 10 li. for every play) 10 li. more in consideration of their charge in attending at Hampton Court, where they acted three playes." "The man who made the list" would also, doubtless, have known a few years later—as we, too, may know now by the

same process of "careful research"—that, though the King's players received for six plays acted at Hampton Court and Richmond in the year 1638-9 "20*l.* a peece for those playes," while they had only "tenne pounds a peece for the other eighteene acted at Whitehall" (*ibid.*, vol. xcv., p. 318), the extra 10*l.* a play was given them because "they were not only at ye losse of their day at home, but at extraordinary charges by travayling, and carriage of their goods."

Further, it would have been clear to him then—as it can be made clear to us now by carefully studying the Lord Chamberlain's warrants—that, when such special expenses and losses are not specifically noted in the warrants as the reasons for granting the extra £10, they were understood and implied both by the players and their paymasters; and that when there were no losses or no extra expenses, or when these were made up to the players in some other way, then the regulation fee of £10 only per play would hold good and consequently be authorized in the warrant.

The last case, in fact, was just that of the fourteen plays we have been discussing, and I can prove conclusively, not only that these plays *might* have been, but that they *must* have been, acted at Hampton Court, and that they *could* have been acted at no other place—for the following reasons. Throughout the winter months, 1636-7, the plague was raging in London, the theatres

Facsimiles of two signatures of the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, one attached to a Warrant of the year 1636, and the other to the Warrant of March 12th, 1636-7, which is admitted by "Audi alteram partem" to be genuine.

were closed by Order in Council, and the Court, having retired early in the autumn to Hampton Court, remained there in closely guarded seclusion, nobody from London being allowed within ten miles of the palace.

The King's players, however, were specially summoned by his Majesty "to assemble their companie and keepe themselves togither neere our Court for our service"; and they were granted a special allowance of £20 a week for their expenses, "to commence from the first day of November last past, and to continue during our pleasure, to be taken unto them as of our princely bountie"—and your correspondent "*did not know that*"!

This truly "princely bountie" lasted until the end of January. My authority is the original "Letters" under the Privy Seal, dated Hampton Court, December 13th, 1636—a parchment of eleven lines, which is to be found in the Record Office (State Papers, Dom., Charles I, vol. cccxxxvii., No. 33).

Now we can see why it was that the Lord Chamberlain, the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, when directing in his warrant of March 12th, 1636/7, that there should

"bee payd unto John Lowen and Joseph Taylor or either of them, for themselves and the rest of the company of his Ma^ts^ Players, the summe of Two hundred and tenne pounds . . . for one and twenty Playes, by them acted before his Ma^tie^ at Hampton Court and elsewhere within the space of a yeere ended in February last"—

now we can see why he was careful to add, "beeing after the usual and accustomed rate of tenne pounds for each play." For, although willing enough, no doubt, as one

of that "most noble and incomparable paire of brethren" who had befriended the playwright and player, William Shakespeare, to "see the players well bestowed," yet he must have been too old and wary a servant of the Crown to let them be paid twice over for their "diet and lodging," &c.

He goes on to direct the payment to them of, in addition, a special "summe of Thirty Pounds more for their paynes in studying and acting the new play sent from Oxford, called 'The Royal Slave'"—by Cartwright—thus making up the number of the plays to the full twenty-two given in the Audit Office list.

As the players' stay at or near Hampton Court lasted three full months, their weekly allowance merely must have amounted in the aggregate to £260—twice as much as they would have got by an additional £10 for each of the plays presented there; while altogether, with the usual fees for the twenty-one plays, and the special fee of £30 for "The Royal Slave," they must have received from the King's coffers in this one year alone no less than £500—equivalent, say, to £4,000 now. Cartwright, the author of the play, was given by the King £40 for himself—perhaps for superintending the performance. These facts are worth noting by the way as showing what a munificent patron of the drama was Charles I.

We can now understand why it was that Pembroke and Montgomery explicitly stated in his warrant (graciously

conceded by my critic, as I have already noted, to be genuine), that the "one and twenty Playes" were "acted at Hampton Court and elsewhere"—his specific mention of that palace obviously pointing to the fact that the greater number of them had been acted there. Nothing, in truth, could be much plainer. How, then, does your correspondent try to get over the difficulty? Really by a most amazing and audacious procedure. He positively questions the correctness of the Lord Chamberlain's statement, and seeks to set him right by asseverating :—

> "But it could only be 'The Royal Slave' which was acted at Hampton Court, because the other twenty-one had only the usual allowance of £10, and must have been acted in London. But the writer of the list makes fourteen of them acted at Hampton Court!"

Clumsy forger! Ignorant man!

Yet Herbert, the Master of the Revels, agrees with "the writer of the list," and with the Lord Chamberlain, and not with your correspondent. For in Malone's verbatim transcript of his list (as printed, p. 239, vol. iii., of the "Variorum," 1821) we find the heading "At Hampton Court, 1636," applying to all the plays from "the first part of 'Arviragus,' Monday afternoon, 26 Decem.," to "'Julius Cæsar' at St. James's, the 31 Jan., 1636." But perhaps your correspondent will maintain that Herbert was wrong, too!

He concludes with a remark about the ink. He had before assured us that "the constituents of the ink used in the Record Office were the same from before the begin-

ning of the seventeenth century down to the date at which he [*i.e.*, Cunningham] used it." He now declares: "The fact that the ink is the same, out of the same brewing, as in the list 31 years before, casts a lurid light on the whole confection."

A "confection," indeed, there is, not of forgeries by Peter Cunningham, but of my critic's own mixture of unfounded and inconsistent assumptions, by which he endeavours again to fix on a dead man's memory the stigma of a crime of which he is now, I think I may say, generally admitted to have been entirely innocent.

I have heard that a distinguished scholar was appealed to, some few years ago, by one of Cunningham's relatives, since dead, to clear his memory from this unmerited stain. Time and chance have at last provided the opportunity for rendering him this tardy justice. But in order that it should be complete, decisive, and final, it was desirable that anything to be said on the other side should be publicly set forth. This has now been done in the columns of "The Athenæum," so that all Shakespearean scholars, and all interested in our literary annals, may be able to judge, once for all, what is the worth of the case that can be made against Peter Cunningham and the Revels' lists of plays.

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS.

SINCE the publication of the foregoing in a series of five letters to "The Athenæum," four further articles by "Audi alteram partem," in rejoinder to them, have appeared in that journal, at intervals between October, 1911, and August, 1912.

In so far as there is any attempt in these new articles to refute the arguments set out *ante*, they might well have been left altogether unnoticed, containing, as they do, little more than reiterations of former assertions, without any additional proof or any attempt to meet the answers already given to them. Indeed, my critic has, in most cases, found it convenient to pass by entirely what I have said.

Still, as he makes some new assertions, though no less unwarranted and unsupported by evidence than his earlier ones, it seems well that these should be analyzed, lest, in default, it might be supposed that there was anything in them.

There is another reason rendering it advisable to reply to these later articles, namely: that in them he has developed an entirely new issue by elaborating his challenge, recorded above, of the play-list of 1636-7, and by endeavouring to fasten the forgery of this document also on the memory of the unfortunate Cunningham—with what justice or reason the reader of what follows must judge for himself. Indeed, he seems to have a sort of mania for discovering forgery everywhere, extending his suspicions, as we shall see, even to "Malone's scrap," in the Bodleian,

for no better reason, apparently, than that its genuineness—against which he is unable to bring anything like an argument—tends to corroborate the authenticity of the play-lists.

Further, the literary standing of the journal, in which these further articles appeared, requires that they should receive notice from me; while it is due to the many distinguished scholars in all parts of the world who have accepted the conclusions arrived at in "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries" that they should have placed before them the answers to any criticisms thereof.

Passing now to his replies on the special points of the discussion, I turn first to the play-list of 1604-5. As to this, to begin with, he has not one word to say to all I have set out on pages 17 to 21, in answer to his strictures on the spelling of the words "poets," "plays," "Octobar," "Novembar," "Shaxberd," and "Ma^{tis}." He adopts instead the scarcely creditable though convenient expedient of ignoring it all, being incapable, apparently, of the frankness of owning that he was entirely in the wrong. Then, to my answer to his comments on the expressions "St. Jhons Night," "Inosents Night," etc., again, instead of a frank admission of his amazing blunder, he quibbles over the instances I cite, objecting in one case—my citations from the "Revels' Accounts"—that they "are from the expenses of carriage of stuff and workmen's expenses"; in another case—my citations from the "Declared Accounts"—that they "concerned themselves with the amount of money spent, and to whom given"; and in the third case—my citations from "Herbert's Office Book"—that "the notes kept by Sir Henry Herbert are more in the nature of a diary," as if all these circumstances could make the slightest difference!

His assertion was precise and definite that "in *no other case*

in the history of plays is it recorded." It is *always* rendered "St. John's day at night, Innocent's day at night, etc." And yet, after the overwhelming refutation of his absurdly inaccurate statement, he has the effrontery to pretend that he was really quite right all the time!

Equally evasive and still more disingenuous is his treatment of my answer to his criticism of the entry: "Betwin Newers Day and Twelfe Day, a play of 'Loue's Labours Lost'"—which he again pronounces false "through indefiniteness," and because there is no evidence in the official archives of any preparations having been made for any play at Court between those dates.

Further, he says, "the Declared Accounts, Pipe Office 543, show that the King's Players did not play between Innocents Day at night and the 7th of January." They show nothing of the kind. They show merely that the King's Players did not play *at Court*—a fact pointed out by me originally in my little book, and emphasized in my letters to "The Athenæum." This, of course, the anonymous correspondent of that journal knew well enough; and his putting the fact forward as if it were an argument against my contention is merely for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of its readers.

My suggestion, of course, was that the entry, though it appears in a list of performances for which the Revels Office were responsible, referred to a presentation of the play at Lord Southampton's, and not to one at Court at all. That there was an acting of the play in question at Southampton House—or, at any rate, at Lord Cranborne's—he is, indeed, constrained to admit, but he claims that the letter, now in the Record Office, from Dudley Carleton to John Chamberlain, which I had referred to in support of my view, is proof positive that the acting took

place on January 12th. His reason is that in this letter, which is dated the 15th, there occurs a passage which he quotes—or rather misquotes—thus: "Last Night's revels were kept at my Lord of Cranborne's, and ye like two nights before at my Lord of Southampton's." But with his unfortunate tendency to inaccuracy of quotation—especially when it happens to strengthen his own case and weaken his opponent's—he omits the context, suppresses the article "The" at the beginning of the sentence, and substitutes *night's* for *nights*. The full sentence really reads thus in the original:—

> "It seems we shall have Christmas all the yeare and therefore I shall never be owt of matter. The last nights revels were kept at my Lord of Cranborne's, where y^e^ Q. w^th^ y^e^ D. of Holst and a great part of y^e^ Court were feasted, and the like two nights before at my L^d^ of Southampton's. The Temples have both of them done somewhat since Twelftide but nothing memorable, save that it was observed on Friday last at night y^e^ greatest part of y^e^ femal audience was y^e^ sisterhoode of blackfriers. . . ."

It is clear enough, I think, from this extract that the definite article (deliberately omitted by my critic in order to make out that Carleton was referring to January 14th as the date of the revels at Lord Cranborne's, and consequently to January 12th as that of the acting of "Love's Labour's Lost" at Lord Southampton's) is really essential, with the context and the real spelling of the word "nights," to the proper understanding of the true meaning of Dudley Carleton's letter. Besides, the fact that the letter is dated not at the beginning but at the end, in the margin, sideways, shows that there could scarcely have been any reference intended to the day before by the expression "The last nights revels": thus fortifying my reading of what the writer meant. Indeed, we have no certainty that this earlier part of the letter was not written a day or two before the end of it, as was often the case with letters at that period.

But is it necessary to labour such obvious points—obvious, at any rate, to anybody in the slightest degree familiar with the private correspondence of the time? "The last nights revels" referred to were then, it would seem, the last nights revels of Christmas time, while those of "Twelf-tide" were the Queen's Great "Masque of Blackness," by Ben Jonson—fully described by Carleton in his letter to Sir Ralph Winwood; and two plays before the King and the Court by His Majesty's Players, one on the 7th of January and the other on the 8th ("Henry V" and "Every Man out of his Humour," according to the impugned play-list), for which they were duly paid "uppon the Councells Warraunte." (Declared Accounts, Treasurer of the Chamber, Bundle 388, Roll 42.) The festivities at the Inner and Middle Temples must have followed these. On the 9th or 10th the King went off to Royston, and Twelfth-tide was over. (State Papers. Domestic. James I. Vol. xii., No. 13, etc.).

These are the reasons why I challenged the contention of "Audi alteram partem" that the date of the performance at Southampton House was January 12th, and asserted, on the contrary (*ante*, p. 26), that "a careful reading of the exact words of Carleton's original letter in the Record Office, instead of the bare abstract of it in the Calendar, suggests that the festivities referred to probably took place on an earlier day in the year—presumably "betwin Newers Day and Twelfe Day."

"Audi alteram partem" certainly understood my meaning well enough, and appreciated the grounds of it—otherwise he would not have deliberately "cooked" his authority as I have shown he did. Yet he coolly talks of my "misreading of the letter"!

Besides, I have since found further evidence in support

of my view. There is a cypher letter in the Record Office signed as from "63"—that is, one Vincent—to a certain Mr. Benson, living at Brussels, dated January 10th (intercepted and decyphered at the time by Thos. Phelippes), in which he says, "The K., now Y^e^ festivalls of Christmas are past, is gone agayne to his pastimes at Royston not to return till Candlemas call him to the finishing of Court ceremonyes. The Q. is reddye to take her chamber now twelve night sport is past and intends to bring us forth an English prince at Greenwich."

Again, there is another letter—from Dudley Carleton to Sir Ralph Winwood ("Memorial" vol. ii., p. 43), undated, but evidently belonging to the early part of January—also confirmatory of my view. In it the writer, who happened to be just at that time in waiting at Court as a "quarterly usher," after giving a very amusing and vivid description of the Queen's "Masque of Blackness" on Twelth night, goes on to say: "The King is gone to Huntingdon where he will stay till towards Candlemas. The Queen goes to Greenwich this week, to give Whitehall some ayre against that time."

Further, there is yet another letter, one from John Chamberlain to Winwood, dated January 26th ("Memorials," vol. ii., p. 46), in which he says:—"I doubt not but Dudley Carleton hath acquainted you with all their Christmas games at Court, for he was a spectator of all the sports and shows. The King went to Roiston two days after Twelf-tide, where and thereabout he hath continued ever since."

In none of these letters, it will be noticed, is there any reference to festivities after the King's departure on the 9th or 10th.

Besides, even if it could be proved to be the case that January 12th was the date of the performance of "Love's Labour's

Lost" at Southampton House, before the Queen and her brother the Duke of Holst or Holstein, though it would certainly show that I am wrong in my reading of Carleton's letter to Chamberlain, the mere discrepancy in this date could not weigh very much against the authenticity of the document in question. So much for the "Love's Labour's Lost" entry.

My critic's dealing with the case of "The Fayre Mayd of Bristoe" is on a par with the rest. After my conclusive proof that that play had been acted, not during the Christmastide of 1604-5, but during that of 1603-4, he, instead of frankly owning he had made a mistake, can bring himself to do nothing more than grudgingly remark, "It is quite possible he *may* be right," adding irrelevantly, "That is not dated."

He next finds fault with me for having charged Grant White with "remarkable carelessness" in declaring that only in the single instance of this account-book out of thirteen similar ones is the name of a play, mask, or interlude given—"a statement," I asserted, "absolutely opposed to the facts," citing in support of my assertion the lists of 1611-12 and 1636-7. On this my critic comments: "It is, indeed, arguing in a circle to prove by the authority of one suspected document the authenticity of another; a circle which is again described by an appeal to the authority of the third suspected document of 1636."

This is a characteristic example of my opponent's special pleading—special pleading, I say, because it can scarcely have been put forward with any conviction of its being an honest argument—as I shall show in a moment. For, as duly noted in my little book, the document of 1611-12, though suspected by some, was specifically stated by Grant White to be, in his opinion, authentic. This, of course, was well-known to my critic; who

also knew as well as I did, that the document of 1636-7 had never been suspected by anyone, neither by Grant White nor anybody else, until he challenged it himself on July 29th, 1911, and announced to the world that he could "*prove it to be a forgery.*"

In no way, therefore, did I attempt to prove the authenticity of one suspected document by another, suspected or unsuspected. I merely blamed, and, I maintain, quite rightly blamed, Grant White for his carelessness in arguing against one document on grounds which his knowledge of the existence of another, and his belief in its authenticity, should have prevented him from having recourse to. Consequently, there was no arguing in a circle.

Such a method of discussion as this of my critic's is surely a great deal worse than any arguing in a circle: it is disingenuous; indeed, more than that, it is a deliberate trumping up of a false suggestion, discreditable as much to the person resorting to it as it is discrediting to the argument it is designed to support.

Besides, it was not only these two documents, called "forged" by "Audi alteram partem," that I had in my mind—as he knows well enough—when I blamed Grant White for his carelessness in supporting his accusation against Peter Cunningham by "a statement absolutely opposed to the facts"—a statement now colourably adopted by my critic to bolster up a false point against me. I was thinking quite as much of the list of six plays in the account of 1571-2, of the list of another six in that of 1576-7, of yet another six in that of 1578-9, of nine in 1579-80, seven in 1580-1, six again in 1581-2, and six more in 1584-5. (Cunningham's "Revels," and Feuillerat "Documents relating to the Office of the Revels.") These play-lists "Audi alteram partem" can certainly not, or ought certainly not, to have been ignorant of, though he shirks mention of them, in order to distort the facts

and to try and make me out to the readers of "The Athenæum" to be wrong in this small, subsidiary point, when he really knows well enough that, in truth, I am perfectly right about it. What reliance can one place on the assertions or judgment of a controversialist condescending to subterfuges of this sort?

He next goes on to declare: "Mr. Grant is so far right, as among *all* (his italics) the Books of the Revels which have come down to us between 1584-5 and 1660, there are no other lists of plays than the three which Cunningham *found*" (his italics).

Who, reading this assertion, would for a moment suppose that the writer of it knew all the time that every one of the "thirteen similar account books" referred to by Grant White—if we include the two of James I's time containing the disputed lists—*that every one of them* has a list of plays prefixed to it, except *one*, and that that single one is the account for 1587-8, where the omission of a play-list caused the auditor to write in the margin: "The names of the playes shold be expressed" (see *ante*, p. 17, and "Some Supposed Forgeries," p. 37).*

Again, who, reading the above assertion, would for a moment suppose that the writer of it knew all the time that between this account of 1587-8 and that of 1660 there were (excluding the two of James I's time comprised in Grant White's "thirteen") only six others extant—those for the years 1629-35, in Charles I's time—and that the very existence of these accounts, whether with play-lists or without play-lists, was evidently quite unknown to Grant White? Yet such are the facts: rendering it perfectly clear that this critic—wisely masking himself behind a pseudonym—knew when he wrote the sentence above quoted, that I was entirely right in what I had said on this point, that Grant White

* See also *Feuillerat*, pp. 378, 380, and 381, note, who transcribes it, incorrectly, it seems to me, "wold."

was "not so far right," or right at all, but quite wrong; and that my censure of him for his carelessness and his unfair attack on Peter Cunningham was completely justified and only too well merited.

But there is more than this. It is equally clear from the tricky, hedging way in which my critic framed his sentence that he was quite conscious all the time how much what he was writing was calculated to confuse and mislead his readers: and all this not to forward his own case, nor yet to damage mine; not even to vindicate himself; but merely, by this misrepresentation, to discredit a remark of mine on a point altogether beside the main issue.

Rarely can so palpably fallacious a method of argument—like many similar ones which I shall notice later on—have been addressed to Shakespearan students through the columns of our leading literary journal. Indeed, were not the general topic in discussion one of real importance in the history of Shakespearean drama, the arguments of such a disputant would not be worth taking any further notice of.

These are all the new points which my critic has tried to make in further substantiation of his former criticism of the play-list of 1604-5. He concludes with what he is pleased to call "a piece of negative evidence." Having evidently conceived grave suspicions against the famous "Malone Scrap" (discovered in the Bodleian by Halliwell-Phillipps in 1879), before he had ever seen it, he was naturally not disposed—his methods of investigation being what they are—to think much of it when he saw it. Having examined it, he asserts—and this is all that he can find to say against it—that "it is quite unlike any of Malone's other scraps." But here I am compelled to differ from him

entirely. Having myself examined it, and the whole contents of the book in which it is pasted, not once only but several times, I can find nothing in the least exceptional about it. All the scraps consist of bits of paper of various qualities, sizes, shapes, and colours, written in several different hands, with several different inks.

But this remarkable investigator is not one to be much disconcerted by facts—when he has got a theory to maintain. As may be remembered, I have already noted* that when lacking evidence to support his contentions, he has a funny way of invoking the verdict of an imaginary "artist," "writing-master," or "man of letters" to help him out. Now, in the barrenness of facts which he is able to collect against this Bodleian document, it is to an abstract "psychologist" that he is driven to appeal. "Any psychologist," he boldly declares, "reading Malone's private letters, papers and publications would be assured he had never seen it." We might as well be told what a "phrenologist or "clairvoyant" would have thought. So far as there is anything in an argument of this sort, most people would prefer to know the opinions of actual men in the flesh, such as Halliwell-Phillipps, and many other scholars, who have drawn conclusions exactly opposite to those of his fictitious "psychologist." Yet this is the whole "negative evidence" on which he is ready to question the authenticity of the "scrap" and the argument founded on it in favour of the play-list of 1604-5; and apparently expects other people to do likewise.

As to the origin of the "scrap": in discussing it he is, of course, as inaccurate as is his wont. "It did not," writes he, "as Mr. Law says, come direct from his (Malone's) manuscripts

**Ante*, pp. 15 and 16.

through Boswell in 1821"—though nowhere in the course of the discussion did I say this on my own authority. It was not my statement, but Halliwell-Phillipps's, who investigated the whole matter thoroughly when he found the "scrap," and who made it on the authority of Mr. H. S. Parker, who had arranged the Malone collections in the early seventies. However, "Audi alterem partem" now makes bold to declare that "it was *purchased* by the Bodleian in 1838 from Mr. Thomas Rodd, a second-hand bookseller in London, among a mass of other papers of Malone's."

This is a tolerably positive assertion, and in proof of it he cites Mr. Madan's "Summary of the Bodleian Manuscripts"—Additions 1838. As usual, however, his authority does not bear out what he founds on it. Mr. Madan's general expression as to the whole lot of these Malone volumes is cautious. "They *seem*," he says, "to have been purchased from Thomas Rodd, the London bookseller, in this year (1838)"; while, as to the volume of manuscripts numbered "Malone 29"—which contains the "scrap" in question—he says only that "it is *probable* that the MS. (*i.e.*, collection of manuscripts) came at the same time, unbound, and though now a folio, *may* represent an original octave bundle, or even two."

When so high an authority only ventures to hazard a conjecture like this, it scarcely becomes an anonymous objector to turn so qualified an opinion into an absolute fact.

But this is not all. For my critic adds, "There is a *suggestion* of a possibility of its not having reached that shelter until the addition of 1878." As a fact, there has been no such suggestion in reference to this volume by *anyone* except "Audi," etc., himself. He has endeavoured to distort a remark of Mr. Madan's in regard

to two other volumes of Malone's papers, of quite different character and composition, of which Mr. Madan says, "It is *probable* that part of the contents of these volumes came to the library in 1878." Mr. Madan makes no such suggestion in regard to "MS. Malone 29"; and the attempt to put it on him is a most impudent proceeding on the part of my critic. Had the "scrap" really come to the Bodleian in 1878, Mr. Parker would, of course, have known of it in 1879, and have so informed Halliwell-Phillipps. On the contrary, we have it distinctly on his authority that the "scrap" had been, with other similar Malone documents, sorted and arranged in the early seventies.

Thus does this peculiar controversialist again "cook" his evidence to support his argument. Is there not here, indeed, more than "a *suggestion* of the possibility" of a deliberate misrepresentation?

And not even with this is he satisfied. For he makes the further "*suggestion* of a possibility"—of course, without the slighest reason or probability—that the "scrap" "*might* have been added to the others by Mr. Rodd through carelessness, ignorance, or liberality in the matter of Shakesperiana"—very unusual liberality, surely, in a second-hand bookseller!

Still less does he give any grounds for his singular suggestion that "it *might* have been planted in the bookseller's shop innocently by an inquiring mind, or, guiltily, by some other, to see what fruit it *might* bear." Perhaps it *might*, for it is difficult to set bounds to the silliness of some minds, "inquiring" or "guilty"; though forty years must have seemed to the "planter" a long time to wait for the bearing of the "fruit."

That the "scrap" was, at any rate, copied directly from the Record Office play-list—whether or not by someone for Malone

a hundred years ago—is pretty evident when we compare one with the other. For instance, in the play-list, line 5, the dot of the *i* in the word "Venis" happens to come just over the first portion of the letter *n*, as may be seen in the facsimile prefixed to "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries," and this peculiarity—due, doubtless, to hurried or careless writing—is curiously enough found to be followed in the "scrap," where the word is written as though it were meant to be "Veins." This fact scarcely supports the theory that the two emanated from a common fraudulent hand, but suggests rather that the "scrap" was the handiwork of a scrupulous, but not very intelligent copyist.

So much for the "Malone scrap" and the play-list of 1604-5.

Coming next to that of 1611-12, my critic adopts his usual tactics of backing out of, or evading, the issues he himself has raised, or of reiterating his former assertions without meeting, or even noticing, the answers given to them. He does, it is true, give some particulars of discrepancies to be detected between this list of plays and the uncertain information furnished by the "Declared Accounts." But discrepancies, or, rather, perhaps, apparent discrepancies, where we know so little of the facts and circumstances, scarcely afford sufficient grounds for condemning the authenticity of a document otherwise in every particular entirely unimpeachable. Moreover, I maintain that it is utterly preposterous to suppose that Peter Cunningham, or anyone else, would have concocted this list of plays in such a way as to be in plain contradiction with the material out of which alone he could have concocted it, which material, too, he published alongside in the same book with his supposed forgery. Forgers do stupid

things sometimes when perpetrating their frauds, but scarcely such perversely and gratuitously stupid things as that.

I pass next to my critic's newly formulated strictures on the play-list of 1636-7, noticing first some preliminary objections of his to my argument on points rather of form than substance. He had in one of his earlier articles found fault with me for having, in "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries," written of the packet of papers, which contains this document, as a "Revels' Account." After I had (*ante*, on p. 35) vindicated this description of the packet, he—in pursuance of his usual tactics—ignores my vindication, and proceeds to raise another objection, namely, that I had spoken of it as a "Revels' Account-*Book*." In this I readily admit that his criticism—whatever weight we may think it ought to have—is justified; though in any case it does not, of course, in any degree affect the argument. The packet certainly cannot be correctly described as a *book;* though I may point out that in my letters, reprinted above, when discussing the play-list, which forms part of the packet, I never so described it. I only wrote of it as such once—incidentally—in my little book, before it was by anyone questioned, or in any way discussed or in issue; and after having given it only a very cursory glance; as it was at that time quite outside the scope of my investigations. These facts, of course, my critic entirely ignores.

He then goes on to point out that the documents could not be Sir George Buc's—as I had in one passage called them—because that "master" had died in 1623. Here again, this misdescription of mine was a mere oversight—so much so, that elsewhere in the same book (p. 77) I had correctly referred to Sir

Henry Herbert as "Master of the Revels" in 1623. The point does not in any case in the least affect the argument.

He then proceeds to remark: "It is difficult to believe that Mr. Law had studied this document before he wrote these words"; to which I have only to reply: "Perfectly true, I had not *then* studied it." Since his aspersions on its authenticity, I have studied it very carefully; and so far as my opinion on such a question is of any value, I entirely agree with the scholars and archivists who have always taken it to be genuine; and not with this anonymous writer, who tries to make out that it is forged.

I must now examine the substantive arguments newly advanced by him against the authenticity of this play-list of 1636-7. To begin with, he starts off with the amazing statement that he was "quite correct in reckoning £20 as the usual price for Hampton Court plays." This in the face of all the proofs I set out to the contrary in my letters as printed *ante!* Nevertheless, with all his palpable evasion, he is compelled to admit—though he does so grudgingly enough—that I have proved that the plays he declared could *not* have been acted at Hampton Court undoubtedly had been acted in that palace. Thus the main ground on which he challenged this document is entirely broken down.

He observes, however, that he is "not at the end of his resources"; which, after the experience of some seventeen columns in "the Athenæum" of his methods of controversy, one can readily believe. So he sets about supporting his charge of forgery against the dead Cunningham by applying a new "historical test of manuscript authority," which he is good enough to invite other investigators to follow.

His first step in this method of his is to point out that the

Record Office list "does not agree entirely with Malone's transcript from Sir Henry Herbert's diary": and to give emphasis to this criticism, he prints the list in such a way as to suggest some dozen differences from the transcript. This is deliberately calculated to obscure the facts and confuse the issues. For Herbert's list is obviously meant, as I have several times pointed out, to cover only the short period between St. Stephen's Day, 1636, and Shrove Tuesday, 1637; whereas the Record Office list as obviously purports, whether forged or genuine, to be a detailed enumeration of all the performances at Court by the King's Players from Easter Monday, 1636, to Shrove Tuesday, 1637. But so far as the two documents relate to the same period, they are very nearly identical, the only substantial difference being the one noted by me, *ante*, p. 38.

According to "Audi," etc., the Record Office list is "evidently based on Malone's extracts from Sir Henry Herbert's private diary"—based on them, that is to say, on the assumption that it is a modern concoction. But if it were, one has again to ask: how could any forger have been so foolish as to go out of his way to challenge enquiry, if not to awaken serious suspicion, by gratuitously departing, though only in two small particulars, on this occasion again from his model? The fact of such discrepancies* surely tells as much in favour of the genuineness of the document as against it.

Continuing his argument, his next point against this play-list, proving it, he says, to be a modern concoction, is that it assigns to the 24th of January, 1637, the acting of "Hamlet" before Charles I and his Queen at Hampton Court; whereas, he

* The explanation of the discrepancies is, doubtless, some change in the programme made by the King at the last moment. Herbert's list was probably of the plays as originally commanded.

declares, previous to that date their Majesties and the whole Court had left that Palace for London.

In proof of this assertion, he refers to "a contemporary letter written by a certain 'E. R.', evidently some Court officer," says he, "to Sir Thomas Puckering,* dated 17th Jan. 1636-7," from which we learn, according to him, "that having paid a number of short visits, it had been definitely settled that the Queen should go to Somerset House on the 18th, while the King went to Theobalds, and that on the 21st they should meet at St. James's to keep there." "This letter," he adds, "can be read in the Birch MSS. and is printed in Birch's Charles 1st,† and doubly kills the 'Hamlett' performance."

From such a statement as this, anyone would suppose that the impugner of the document was quoting from an original contemporary manuscript, as, indeed, he implies he is, and as he evidently thought he was; whereas, in reality, E.R.'s letter in the Birch MSS. is nothing of the sort, as should be apparent to anyone with even only a slight experience in the reading of old English writings. It is obviously, in fact, nothing else but a transcript by an early eighteenth century hand, with the spelling modernised, and with many alterations, erasures, and corrections, and some palpable mistakes. Consequently, as a piece of docu-

* Sir Thomas Puckering was the only surviving son of Sir John Puckering, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and was made a baronet in 1612. He died on March 20th, 1638, not in 1636, as stated in the Dictionary of National Biography.

† There is, strictly speaking, no such book as "Birch's Charles I," and none such will be found in any library catalogue under Birch's name. The title of the work meant is "The Court and Times of Charles I, illustrated by authentic and confidential letters." It was edited by the author of "The Court and Times of James 1st"—that is, F. R. Williams, and its date of publication was 1848. It is true that the letters are mainly taken from Dr. Birch's collection of manuscripts now in the British Museum, but Birch himself had been dead eighty-two years before they were published in that book.

mentary evidence for determining a question of disputed dates, it can be only of very qualified value. And the man who falls into this egregious error, and who largely bases on it his new charge of forgery against Peter Cunningham, is the one who presumes to set up his own opinion on the genuineness of the documents, against the deliberate judgment of such authorities as Sir George Warner, Sir Henry Maxwell-Lyte, Professor Feuillerat, and Dr. Wallace!

This gives one a measure by which to estimate the extent of his self-confidence, and the value of his opinion; while his carelessness is equally astonishing. For instance, he speaks, as we have seen, of the writer of the letter as "a certain E. R., evidently some Court Officer." Had he taken the trouble to turn over a few leaves of the book in which the transcripts he quotes from are bound up, or even a few of the printed pages of "The Court and Times of Charles Ist," to which he refers, he would quickly have come across many other letters of E. R.'s to Sir Thomas Puckering, and would have found that these initials were those of Edward Rossingham, who clearly was nothing more than a purveyor of Cockney gossip to Puckering, supplying information of scarcely more value or accuracy than that contained in any "London Letter" of a provincial newspaper of the present day; and who, moreover, had quite clearly not the slightest pretensions to being "some Court Officer," as is plain enough from his mode of referring to Court doings. Therefore, even if we accepted the transcript of the letter of the 17th of January as an entirely accurate reproduction of the mislaid or lost original, it does not at all follow that Edward Rossingham's forecasts of what were to be the movements of the Court were exactly fulfilled. Indeed, I am able to prove that in several particulars, at any rate, they

were certainly not fulfilled. For instance, instead of leaving Hampton Court on January 18th, as the Birch transcript of E. R.'s letter says was the King's intention, His Majesty really remained at Hampton Court. Thence we find him writing a letter on the 18th, and there he presided over meetings of the Privy Council, both on January the 18th and 22nd. The evidence is no less strong that the Court did not remove to London until the 25th. These statements I do not make from prognostications found in dubious transcripts of lost gossiping letters, but from original contemporary State documents preserved in the Record Office (State Papers. Domestic. Charles I, Vol. CCCXLIV, Nos. 35, 36, 60, etc.).

But there is more to confute what my critic asserts. For he —disingenuous, as always—attempts to obscure the fact, plain enough though it evidently is to him, that Sir Henry Herbert's Office Book (according to Malone's extract from it), though it differs from the Record Office play-list in giving no play at all on the 17th, and in assigning "Rollo" instead of "Hamlett" to the 24th of January, yet concurs with it in giving Hampton Court as the place of performance of the play—whatever it was—presented on that night before the King and Queen. Which are we to accept? Edward Rossingham's London gossip, as to what were to be the movements of the Court, in the inauthentic form in which it reaches us, or the records which absolutely conflict with it—the Acts of the Privy Council and other State papers, and the notes of the Master of the Revels at the time?

My anonymous critic's third point against this play-list will be found, when tested, to have no more substance or force than the two just dissected. The document, he avers, *must* be a

modern fabrication, because, says he, it gives January 12th as the date of the performance at Hampton Court by the King's Players of Cartwright's play from Oxford, "The Royal Slave," whereas, he says, the same E.R., already invoked, distinctly states in a letter dated (according to the Birch transcript) the day before—namely, January 11th—that that very play had been performed on Twelfth Night. Here again, however, it is not an original document which is cited, but another bad transcript by an early eighteenth century hand; and before worrying oneself about the supposed discrepancy one would prefer to see Rossingham's autograph letter—if it be anywhere in existence—and make sure that the dates are all correctly given. Moreover, even if the original agreed entirely with the transcript, it does not in the least follow that Puckering's correspondent would be less inaccurate in the Court intelligence of his letter of January 11th than we found him to be in his letter of January 17th; and there is the alternative that the performance stated by Rossingham to have taken place on Twelfth Night may have been the one which we know the Queen's Players gave for her behoof, and which led to the King's Players wishing to have a try at it also.

However that might have been, certain it is that Herbert in his notes in his Office Book, as copied and printed by Malone, gives January 12th, and not Twelfth Night, as the date of the performance of this play by the King's Players before Charles and his Queen at Hampton Court—thus being in entire accord with the Record Office List.

My ingenious critic, perceiving, rightly enough, that this difficulty was one not to be easily glossed over or hidden, proceeds to assume—without the smallest ground for his assumption—that Malone "misread Herbert's crabbed handwriting, and read *twelfth*

as the date of the current month, whereas it should have read '*Twelfth Night.*'"

This is, indeed, a trying to twist the facts to fit his theory—though it will be found that they are rather too tough for any such clumsy twisting. To begin with, it is an entirely gratuitous assertion made *ad hoc*, that there is anything at all crabbed about Herbert's handwriting. I have read a good deal of it, and find it, on the contrary, clear and easy: and to assert that it is "crabbed" is to say what is *false;* though the falsity, as it happens, would not, even if it were taken for truth, much advance the argument of him who resorts to it. For there is nothing in Malone's published version of Herbert's note that could, in any way, lend colour to the suggested mis-transcription. His way of printing his extracts clearly indicates that he meant them to be taken as exact transcripts, copied word by word and letter by letter. The entries in question are headed: "At Hampton Court, 1636," and follow one another in due chronological order. They are as follows: "The first part of Arviragus, Monday afternoon, 26 Decemb. The second part of Arviragus, tusday 27 Decemb. Love and Honour, on New-years night, Sonday. The Elder Brother on thursday the 5 Janua. [no play at all on the 6th]: the Kinge and no Kinge on tusday ye 10th Janua.: The Royal Slave on thursday the 12th of Janu.—Oxford play written by Cartwright. The King gave him forty pounds." This is followed by, instead of "Hamlet," "Rollo the 24 Janu."; while the next entry—the play of "Julius Cæsar"—is noted as being "at Saint James the 31 Janu. 1636." The fact of the dates being in figures, not words, entirely disposes of the idea that Malone mistakenly read *Twelfth* for *Twelfth Night*, and the giving of the day of the week—Thursday—on which "The Royal Slave"

was acted, still further clenches the point. Twelfth Night would have been a Friday. It also proves to demonstration that a play—whether "Hamlet" or "Rollo"—was acted at Hampton Court on the 24th of January.

There now seems nothing left for my critic but to declare that Herbert's Office Book is a forgery too. Otherwise his whole case against this play-list, so far as it rests on his new "historical test of manuscript authenticity," goes by the board.

Still remaining to be noticed, however, is an endeavour of his to discredit the document by a more direct and positive challenge. "On examining it," he says, "we are at once struck by the difference in colour of the ink from all the other used at the period, and its strong resemblance to the ink of the 1605 suspected document, dated thirty-one years earlier. The handwriting also seems one resembling that of the earlier list (which it had no reason to resemble) somewhat improved by practice."

Two more unfounded assertions, trumped up to support a collapsing case, have not often appeared in Shakespearean controversy. As to the seeming resemblance in the handwriting, I cannot do better than ask any one interested in the question to compare the facsimile on p. 39 *ante* with that prefixed to "Some Supposed Shakespeare Forgeries," and judge for himself. As to the colour of the ink, it can be matched in dozens of similar documents of the same period in the same collection of accounts, and it bears no more special resemblance to that of the play-list of 1604-5 than to any other particular document.

Thus falls to the ground the whole rickety case, built up a year ago by "Audi alteram partem," against the authenticity of the play-list of 1636-7, with it vanishing the unfounded im-

putation, so recklessly put forward, that the document was forged by Peter Cunningham.

With confidence I now leave my vindication of this play-list, as well as of the two earlier and more interesting ones, to the judgment of Shakespearean scholars throughout the world.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

Warrant of the Lord Chamberlain, the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, for the Payment of £240 to the King's Players for Plays acted in 1636-7.

WHEREAS by virtue of his Ma^ts^ Letters Patents bearing date the 16th of June 1625 made and graunted in confirmation of divers Warrants and privy seales unto you formerly directed in the time of o^r^ late Souvraigne Lord King James, you are Authorized (amongst other things) to make payment for Playes Acted before his Ma^tye^: Thees are to pray and require you out of his Ma^ts^ Treasure in your charge to pay or cause to bee payd unto John Lowen and Joseph Taylor or either of them for themselves & the rest of the Company of his Ma^ts^ Players the summe of two hundred & tenne pounds (beeing after the usuall & accustomed rate of Tenne pounds for each play) for One and Twenty Playes by them Acted before his Ma^ty^ at Hampton Court & else where within the space of a yeere ended in February last: and that you likewise pay unto them the summe of Thirtye pounds more for their paynes in studying and Acting the new Play sent from Oxford called The royall slave which in all amounteth to the summe of Two Hundred and forty pounds: and thees together w^th^ their acquittance for the Receipt thereof shall bee your warr^t^

Whitehall the 12th of March 1636. PEMBROKE & MONTGOMERY.

To Sir William Uvedale Kn^t^
Tr'er of His Mats Chamber.

v^to^ Junii 1638.

Rec^d^ the same day and yeare of Sir Wm. Uvedale Kt. Tr'er of his Ma^te^ Chamb^r^ the some of £240.

EYLLÆRDT SWANSTON.

Endorsed across the folded back:

Warrant for paym^t^ of 240^li^ unto the Kinges Players for playes Acted A 1637.

vi^to^ July 1637.

Rec^d^ in p'te of this warrant C^li^
et more 20 Decb '37 L^li^
et more L^li^

per me EYLLÆRDT SWANSTON.
Entred.

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